

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

University of Illinois

New Pier, CHICAGO

The COMPASS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS
130 E. 22d St. New York City



MAY, 1934

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 8

A Letter to President Roosevelt

The following letter to President Roosevelt was drawn up and sent to the President by the Steering Committee of the Association's Division on Government and Social Work. The letter was read by Mr. Swift, Chairman of the Division, in his report to the Annual Meeting of the Association in Kansas City and received the enthusiastic endorsement of the members present.

14th May, 1934.

To the President
White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

The social workers of this country, who are directly concerned with the needs of the unemployed, have warmly supported your broad program for meeting those needs during the past year.

In the interest of the unemployed we welcomed your initiation last spring of a positive and constructive program of unemployment relief, which under the able direction of Mr. Hopkins has resulted in a more adequate and humane treatment of those in need.

We have regarded your Civilian Conservation Corps as a timely measure, offering an opportunity for useful service in a healthy environment to thousands of young men.

We have applauded your recent Civil Works program as providing something of the dignity of work for wages for several million men and women, without requiring the terrible experience of destitution as a test of eligibility.

These and other evidences of your forward-looking and social point of view have won our enthusiastic support. It was in this spirit that the Social Work Conference in Washington on February 16th and 17th strongly protested against the abandonment of your Civil Works program until a new and adequate substitute program had been evolved to take its place. Events since then have demonstrated the inadequacy of the relief and work-relief program to which, as a substitute, we have now returned.

Even with the demonstration of need as a basis of eligibility—which in many communities becomes a “destitution test”—for jobs on work relief, the abandonment of C.W.A. has resulted in a huge increase in the relief load. At the same time, because of the new policy of reducing general federal expenditures, the F.E.R.A. has apparently found it necessary to restrict federal allotments to the states to amounts inadequate for the increased relief needs.

The wholesale closing out of relief cases in rural areas for re-investigation, with no relief granted in many instances during the interim period; the six-months limitation upon work-relief employment; the cutting down of the maximum hours and total wages allowed in work relief; the impossibility of adequate provision for shelter with the resources available now or in the past; the way in which these and other limitations are being interpreted as economy or “deflation” measures in many parts of the country—all of these things indicate a radical departure from the constructive program which we have applauded during the past year. In the ranks of the unemployed, and of those who are ministering to their needs, an attitude of defeat and discouragement is undermining the morale which you have done so much to build up.

We agree that relief is only a sorry substitute for normal employment. But past experience shows that industry can greatly increase production without any substantial increase in the number now employed. This, and the tendency of industry to resist any large increase in labor costs, give little hope for a radical reduction of unemployment in the near future. We believe that until this situation is changed, an adequate program for the maintenance of the unemployed at a decent standard of living should be a first charge upon the resources of this country.

This Association has been in close touch with unemployment relief experience throughout the country during the past three years. We are submitting to you and to Mr. Hopkins the attached report from our Committee on Current Relief Program, urging among other things that the program of the F.E.R.A. Work Division be

broadened and strengthened; that the direct relief appropriations be increased to provide adequate allowances for shelter and other necessary items in a family relief budget; and that undesirable restrictions in the rural relief program be removed.

These changes, all within the spirit of your larger program, will require greater federal appropriations than are now apparently available. We respectfully urge that you call upon the Federal Emergency Relief Administrator for an estimate of the federal appropriations necessary for a more adequate provision for the unemployed, and that the necessary steps be taken to assure such appropriations.

We believe that society through government has an unescapable responsibility to make available the means of subsistence to the unemployed either through the opportunity to work or through relief. This nation is suffering not from scarcity, but from a too easily produced and unevenly distributed abundance. Under such circumstances we believe that meeting the needs of those in distress should not be made secondary to the maintenance—or reduction—of a federal budget based upon the existing income from taxation. Such needs should assuredly be given primary consideration at a time when the total of federal expenditures is falling far below your original estimate for the year.

We urge careful consideration of this plea for the liberalization and strengthening of your unemployment relief program, in the spirit which we believe has actuated your administration.

Respectfully submitted,

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

Steering Committee, Division on Government and Social Work

By LINTON B. SWIFT, Chairman.

Steering Committee	Helen Hall
Linton B. Swift, Chairman	Harry Lurie
Helen Crosby, Secretary	Rev. Dr. John O'Grady
Edith Abbott	Stanley Davies
Joanna C. Colcord	Walter West

Relief Problems and Statistics

The report of the Committee on Current Relief Program, Division on Government and Social Work, given by the Committee chairman, Joanna C. Colcord, at the National Conference of Social Work in Kansas City, is now being printed by the Association. Orders sent to the national office of the AASW, accompanied by 10 cents, will be filled as soon as copies are received from the printer. The section of the Report containing the recommendations is reprinted in this issue of *The Compass* on page 7.

Officers and Committees 1934-35

Dorothy Kahn was elected president of the Association at the Annual Meeting in Kansas City. The officers and committee members for the coming year are as follows:

OFFICERS

President.....	DOROTHY C. KAHN
First Vice-President.....	LEA D. TAYLOR
Second Vice-President.....	SOPHIE HARDY
Third Vice-President.....	THOMAS B. MIMMS
Secretary.....	ELIZABETH H. DEXTER
Treasurer.....	LEROY A. RAMSDELL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Peter Kasius*	Betsey Libbey
Jacob Kepcs*	Ellery F. Reed
Katharine F. Lenroot*	Mrs. Kathleen J. Lowrie
Frances Taussig	Mrs. Mabel H. Mattingly
	Sophonisba P. Breckenridge

NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR 1934-1935

STANLEY P. DAVIES, Chairman	
Paul T. Beisser	Louise Drury
Grace Ferguson	Florence Sytz

* Members whose names are in italics were elected this year for a three year term.

Individual Membership in Family Welfare Association

Members in good standing of the American Association of Social Workers are eligible for professional membership in the Family Welfare Association if they have been engaged in family social work for one year. Annual dues are \$1.00 for Junior Members of the American Association of Social Workers and \$3.00 for Full Members. Laymen concerned with family social work may become Associate Members of the Family Welfare Association with dues of \$5.00 a year.

This plan for individual memberships has been developed by the Family Welfare Association in order to make individuals as well as agencies an integral part of the Association. It is felt to be particularly important at the present time, when drastic changes are taking place, that people who are professionally concerned with what is happening to families should have an opportunity to participate in the family welfare movement.

The three Connecticut chapters, Hartford, New Haven, and Fairfield County, were asked by Helen Hart, State Supervisor of Relief, to form a committee for the purpose of setting minimum standards for emergency unemployment relief in the state. It was suggested that each chapter appoint two members to serve with Miss Hart.

Joint action by these three chapters last year was instrumental in getting a plan drawn up for state and federal relief administration in Connecticut. The chapters are now reported as considering some plan for joining together in a state chapter.

Scholarship at Denver University

A scholarship for a graduate student has been made available at Denver University, Department of Social Work. The money for this scholarship was raised by the Denver Chapter of the AASW and the Denver Social Workers Club. A special loan fund is also available in the department to enable students who have completed at least one quarter of work to continue their course. There are also several student assistantships paying half tuition in return for clerical work in the department.

"I believe all our graduates have become members of the AASW," writes G. Eleanor Kimble, Director of the department, "and we are bringing our present students up in the way they should go by arranging for all full time students to attend the Conference in Kansas City, that point being only 750 miles from here and therefore considered in this part of the world really next door."

An Error

Through an error, the name of Miss Minnie Edelschick was omitted from the list of delegates to the Washington Conference on Governmental Objectives, published in the March issue of *The Compass*. Miss Edelschick was a delegate to the Conference from the Buffalo Chapter and should have been listed with the other delegates who attended the Conference.

Salary Cuts Restored by City Governments

City governments are restoring salary cuts according to the April issue of *Public Management*, journal of the International City Managers' Association. Forty cities out of 210 included in a recent survey made by the magazine have already restored salary cuts in whole or in part and 46 more anticipate taking similar action soon.

Only 9 of the 210 cities had not reduced salaries. The cuts in the 201 cities ranged from 5 to 50 per cent with 17 per cent the average. No salary cuts were made prior to 1932 in the larger cities. Some cities which cut in 1932 made additional reductions in 1933 and a few for 1934. The present move to restore salary cuts has been found necessary because of the drastic nature of the salary cuts and the increased cost of living.

However, the cost of living is going up rapidly for cities as well as for employees. They are paying about 18 per cent more for their supplies and materials now than they were nine months ago according to reports from 143 cities and the problem of meeting these increased costs under reduced budgets is a serious one. The United

States Conference of Mayors and the American Municipal Association are making a detailed study of the feasibility of a central purchasing bureau for large cities whereby economies could be effected in the purchasing of supplies.

Salary Trends in Family Agencies*

Periodic salary studies are favored by many of the family welfare agencies which participated in the Russell Sage Foundation's latest salary study. The Foundation's Department of Statistics undertook a study in April of this year, at the request of the Family Welfare Association, and after the large majority of member agencies had indicated that they were in favor of an immediate study. Ninety of these agencies expressed the conviction that annual salary studies are needed and several more favored periodic studies but at less frequent intervals. Dr. Ralph Hurlin of the Department of Statistics feels that this is evidence of an "important demand among the family agencies for the sort of periodic analysis of salary trends which is made in some other fields, notably public health nursing and public education." At the same time, he warns the agencies of their responsibility for supplying data if regular studies are undertaken since "it is highly important that they (the studies) be thoroughly comparable which can be assured readily only if in each study every important agency is represented."

An important beginning in this direction has been already made by the Department of Statistics which conducted salary studies of family welfare agencies in 1925, 1927, 1929 and 1932 and is now analyzing the returns of the 1934 study. In a preliminary report on the 1934 findings which are based on salaries paid in March, 1934, Dr. Hurlin states that the data will be sufficiently complete on the Family Welfare Association member agencies and the Jewish agencies for comparison with previous years. In addition this year's study includes material from the Catholic and public family agencies so that comparisons with these groups may be made this year and in any future studies.

Preliminary tabulations show the following facts regarding salary changes in 200 agencies reporting on this point¹:

Size of agency (all paid workers)	Total agencies reporting	Reported improvement	Reported reduction	No change
1 to 3 workers	59	9	10	40
4 to 9 workers	69	19	6	44
10 to 49 workers	58	32	3	23
50 or more workers	14	9	0	5
	200	69	19	112

¹ Detailed salary figures have been analyzed so far only for the Jewish agencies.

* Summarized from a preliminary analysis of the Russell Sage Foundation's recent study prepared by Ralph Hurlin for the annual meeting of the Family Welfare Association at the National Conference of Social Work in Kansas City.

The fact that 69 agencies (35%) reported salary improvements is distinctly encouraging, though as Dr. Hurlin suggests, the nature of the increases needs to be carefully considered. Of the 69 agencies, 20 had restored temporary salary cuts, 2 had stopped assessing contributions from salaries, 2 had discontinued payless vacations, 6 had made general salary increases and the remaining 39 had granted increases only to selected workers. Other agencies reported that salary increases were going into effect in a few months so that on the whole there seems to be definite evidence of an upward trend. Among the 69 agencies reporting improvements, 11 were Jewish or more than a fifth of the Jewish group.

Reports on existing vacation schedules with pay showed that 98 of the 172 agencies supplying information on this point give vacations of four weeks or more. Forty-two of the 98 give extra vacations in the winter or spring in addition to four weeks or a month in the summer. "The larger agencies are much more liberal with vacations than the smaller ones—and also pay better salaries," Dr. Hurlin reports.

Definite policies regarding sick leave with pay continue to be lacking in many agencies as 84 out of 192 stated that they had no policy. The large majority of these were small agencies employing less than 10 workers. On the other hand 87 agencies reported a definite policy on sick leaves granting two weeks, three or four weeks, or a month with about the same number of agencies in each of these three groups. Only three agencies reported a definite policy of granting no sick leaves with pay.

Information on insurance plans, which was included in this year's study, shows that is still largely an unexplored field. Accident policies covering members of the staff were reported by 57 agencies. Sporadic but significant developments of other types of insurance were reported in a few instances. Group life insurance is carried by both Jewish and non-sectarian agencies in Chicago and Pittsburgh. Two Jewish agencies in Cincinnati and Los Angeles reported sickness insurance, the Jewish agency in Dallas reported insurance covering need for hospital care and the non-sectarian agency in Seattle reported facilities for group medical service.

An extension course for professional social workers has just begun at the University of California. The course, which is open only to college graduates, includes the following subjects: Public Finance in Its Relation to Relief; Public Welfare Administration; Immediate Issues in Social Insurance; The President's Monetary Policy; Public Administration in Its Relation to Welfare.

A Minimum Curriculum in Social Work

FOR over two years the Curriculum Committee of the American Association of Schools of Social Work has been working on an outline of the minimum content of a training program which should be completed by anyone prior to entering social work. From the very beginning, the members of the Committee agreed that one year of graduate work represented the minimum preparation which should be accepted as the standard for admission to the profession and, therefore, addressed themselves to the task of forming a one-year curriculum which should be well balanced. The belief has always been strong that we should be educating young people for social work and not for any special variety or kind of social work.

With this in mind, the Association at its meeting in December, 1932, voted that after 1935 a member school might issue a provisional certificate to any person who at the end of one year of graduate work had completed the following curriculum, including at least 300 hours of field work. The division of time between class room work and field instruction was that not less than one-quarter nor more than one-third of the year's credits should be assigned to field work.

	Semester Hours	Quarter Hours
GROUP A (all required)		
Case Work	2 or 3	3 or 4
Medical Information	2 or 3	3 or 4
Psychiatric Information	2 or 3	3 or 4
	Not less than 6 nor more than 9	Not less than 9 nor more than 12
GROUP B (2 courses required)		
Community Organization	1, 2 or 3	2, 3 or 4
Specialized Case Work	1, 2 or 3	2, 3 or 4
Group Work	1, 2 or 3	2, 3 or 4
	Not less than 4 nor more than 6	Not less than 6 nor more than 9
GROUP C (2 courses required)		
Field of Social Work	2 or 3	2, 3 or 4
Public Welfare Administration		
Child Welfare	2 or 3	2, 3 or 4
Problems of Labor or Industry		
	Not less than 4 nor more than 6	Not less than 6 nor more than 9
GROUP D (1 course required)		
Social Statistics		
Social Research		
Social Legislation	2 or 3	3 or 4
Legal Aspects of Social Work or Social Aspects of Law		
	Not less than 4 nor more than 6	Not less than 6 nor more than 9
	TOTAL 20 or 22	TOTAL 30

In this group two courses may be substituted, giving in combined credit no more than the credit allowed for one course.

FIELD WORK—NOT MORE THAN TEN SEMESTER OR FIFTEEN QUARTER CREDITS OF FIELD WORK.

Note: There should be not less than one semester credit or two quarter credits in any course.

Since this curriculum was approved in its present form by the Association in June, 1933, sub-committees of the Curriculum Committee have been working out suggestive content for the courses therein prescribed. A few of these

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

University of Illinois

Navy Pier, CHICAGO

course outlines are completed and ready for distribution to the schools for their comments and suggestions. There will be several more outlines available by the time of the sessions of the National Conference of Social Work in Kansas City.

The members of the Curriculum Committee have never abandoned the idea that two years of graduate work is really the least time which should be allowed for professional preparation, but the first task was obviously to formulate the content of the first graduate year. The importance of this undertaking has been increased by the recent action of the Association incorporating the minimum curriculum in the requirements made of schools applying for admission. Some of the schools on the quarter system have admitted that it will probably take most students four quarters instead of three to complete the requirements for the certificate. Nevertheless, they believe it will be well to encourage the students to realize this objective.

It will be noticed that the alternatives provided allow for considerable flexibility on the part of the school and choice on the part of the student. It is assumed that in case certain of the required subjects are included in the undergraduate curriculum, additional courses might be offered in the graduate year, and a school which offers only certain of the courses outlined in each bracket may yet confer the certificate. Any student has considerable choice as to the courses actually selected, and yet the result in each case, the Committee hopes, will be a well-balanced curriculum.

The Association is not attempting by this means to fasten one pattern of instruction upon all its member schools, believing that it is particularly important that programs should be susceptible of change in order to meet the requirements of a rapidly changing situation in social work, but is bending its efforts toward maintaining the standards in professional education that have already been achieved and in broadening their application throughout the country.

THE COMPASS

Published monthly except August by

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS
130 EAST 22ND STREET

NEW YORK, N. Y.

VOLUME XV

NUMBER 8

Officers

Dorothy C. Kahn, Pres. Thomas B. Mimms, 3rd V-Pres.
Lea D. Taylor, 1st V-Pres. Elizabeth Dexter, Sec.
Sophie Hardy, 2nd V-Pres. Leroy A. Ramdell, Treas.

Walter West

Florence Taylor, Assistant Executive Secretary

Christine C. Robb, Assistant Executive Secretary

Entered as second-class matter at the post office in New York, N. Y., under the Act of August 24, 1912

Acceptance for mailing at the special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 28, 1924.

Subscription: Non-Members \$1.00 per annum. Members including membership fee \$3.00 and over.

HOUSING NEWS

"No Money for Rent: a Study of the Rental Problems of Unemployment Relief Families and their Landlords," a publication of the Joint Committee on Research of the Community Council of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania School of Social Work, presents statistical evidence of what everyone knows in a general way is happening to low-income groups in regard to present housing conditions. The Committee makes no attempt to deal with the question of a long range re-housing program, but recommends drastic revision of current rent policies in relief. Procurable through the Community Council of Philadelphia.

* * * *

Miss Ernestine McGill, Chairman of the Atlanta Chapter, AASW, reports that the Atlanta Council of Social Agencies has an active Committee on Housing, of which Miss Frankie V. Adams of the Atlanta School of Social Work is the corresponding representative. The President of the Toledo Chapter, Miss L. Genevieve Griffin, writes that the Chairman of the Housing Committee there is Miss Stella Rosenbaum, and that one member of the Committee, Dr. C. J. Bushnell, is also a member of the Metropolitan Housing Board of Toledo. The Pittsburgh Chapter's Committee has been active for more than six months, under the chairmanship of J. P. Tufts. All invite correspondence.

* * * *

"Slum areas are a luxury, a very expensive luxury, for any county to maintain," is the thoroughly documented conclusion expressed in "An Analysis of a Slum Area in Cleveland," prepared for the Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority and distributed through the National Association of Housing Officials. The study is sprinkled with such startling items as the fact that with about 2½% of the city's population, the area under investigation accounts for about 14½% of the city-wide cost of fire protection and 6½% of the total cost of police protection. The combined cost of the area to official and unofficial agencies in 1932 was \$1,750,000 more than receipts from it.

* * * *

The National Public Housing Conference, 112 East 19th Street, New York, has just published at 25c a small book by Abraham Goldfeld, entitled, "Toward Fuller Living Through Public Housing and Leisure Time Activities," in which is presented a resume of the experiences in recreational and social activities of five outstanding American experiments in housing. Sunnyside, Dunbar, Lavanburg, Radburn, and the Amalgamated Houses are treated.

* * * *

Fourteen experts on law and on housing contribute to a lively symposium on Low Cost Housing and Slum Clearance in the March issue of "Law and Contemporary Problems," the quarterly publication of Duke University School of Law. Dr. Carol Aronovici's vigorously expressed impatience with official hesitancy and evasion of reality is especially refreshing, and Ernest J. Bohn's discussion of housing as a political problem offers some shrewd practical suggestions to organizations hopeful of converting plans into houses. Address Law and Contemporary Problems, Duke Station, Durham, North Carolina. Price 60c.

Pittsburgh Chapter Surveys Relief Program

A comprehensive report on relief programs, federal, state and local has been prepared for the Pittsburgh Chapter by its Committee on Public and Private Relief. To make this study, which necessitated the condensation and compilation of a very extensive amount of rapidly changing data, the main Committee of which Edith Miller Tufts was Chairman, was divided into five sub-committees, each with its own chairman. The subjects of the reports by these five sub-committees are as follows:

1. Federal Program for Relief to the Unemployed;
2. State Program for Relief to the Unemployed;
3. Items of Relief Provided in Allegheny County;
4. The Financial Status of the City and County;
5. What the Present Relief Program in Allegheny Does Not Include.

The summaries of federal, state and county services give a very clear picture of the inter-relationships and limitations of the various programs. "Pennsylvania is not administering all types of direct relief allowed by the Federal Government," states the report on the Federal Program for Relief. "Rent or its substitutes, light, gas, water, household supplies are not provided. Until about November, 1933, relief was confined to food. . . . The responsibility rests with the State Emergency Relief Board and the Pennsylvania Legislature to provide adequate funds for basic relief needs. By doing this the state could then take advantage of federal relief grants which aim to meet all essentials of the unemployed without resources."

The State Board is now providing for food, fuel, shoes and clothing, medical care and supplies. Provision for shelter has not yet been made and the report on the State Program for Relief quotes the State Director of Relief, Mr. Biddle, on the need for this provision: "With adequate appropriations for relief purposes now available, provision should be made to provide shelter where necessary as a part of the relief budget. Shelter is a basic necessity of life." Mr. Biddle also recommends the adoption of cash relief and in looking toward the future he recommends the establishment of a long time public relief program, with personnel selected on the merit system, and a full measure of responsibility and the necessary power vested in the State Relief Administration to insure maintenance of standards of local relief administrations.

A graphic picture of what forms of relief are available in Allegheny County from all sources is given in a series of charts. These show the forms of direct relief and other projects which are supported by federal and state funds and what is available through the Department of Public Welfare, the Directors of the Poor and the private agencies.

The report supplementing this showing what items of relief are not provided in Allegheny County stresses the weakness of haphazard relief programs which are not planned to meet the all round needs of the individual, the great need for rent allowances, the importance of medical and dental services for other than emergency cases, and the importance of including in relief plans provisions for leisure time activities.

Not satisfied with assembling information on unmet relief needs, the Committee plunged courageously into the question of the financial resources of the city and county. Members of the chapter are now informed on assessed valuations, bonding power, bonds outstanding, bonds authorized but not issued, debt incurring margin, and tax delinquencies. They know that the city's potential resources so far as bonding power is concerned are in better condition than they were a year ago but that the county's bonding power is less than it was a year ago. They know that in Allegheny County a state law limits the poor tax to 10 mills on the dollar of assessed valuation of taxable property and that this limit can be extended only through action of the courts. They also know that such reports as are available showing the proportion of relief funds from federal, state and local resources indicate that in Pennsylvania local communities assume a very small share of the burden compared with the country as a whole (5.5% of relief funds come from local sources in Pennsylvania as compared with 26.5% for the rest of the country). The report ends by challenging the chapter to consider whether most of the funds for unemployment relief should be supplied by the federal government and if so, how this can be done without drying up local fiscal and functional participations in a social welfare program. Given the present combination of federal, state and local services for unemployment relief, mothers' aid, old age pensions and other forms of assistance, the question is raised as to whether an integrated functional plan can be worked out for Allegheny County and if so, what should be the relation of the fiscal policy to the functional plan.

News in Brief

The new graduate program for September 1934 offered by the School of Social Welfare of the University of Southern California leading to a degree of Master of Science in Social Work conforms to the standards for the provisional certificate authorized by the American Association of Schools of Social Work.

* * *

Carnegie Institute of Technology, Department of Social Work, will offer a postgraduate year to students entering college in the fall of 1934 so that students may qualify for the provisional certificate authorized by the Association of Schools of Social Work.

* * *

The University of Wisconsin School of Social Work has established a graduate year and set up a Master of Science in Social Work as the degree to be granted. The requirements for the degree include not only the year of graduate work at the University but also twenty-one months in an approved social agency with a thesis based upon research during this period of practical experience.

Registration and certification of social workers is a full time job in the opinion of those who are handling this project in California. Although the project is a volunteer one set up by the California Conference of Social Work, 854 applications for registration have been received, taxing the resources of the Conference office and requiring the board of examiners to meet all day Sunday once or twice a month. Of these applications 516 have been approved, 78 denied, 20 withdrawn, and 240 are pending.

* * *

Florida is making great strides with its state plans for a social welfare program. According to Emma Lundberg in the April issue of *The Family*, experienced workers equipped for either specialized or "undifferentiated case work" services are considered fundamental to the program's expectation of permanent success. Furthermore, one of the most important provisions contemplated in the County Welfare Board Bill now in preparation is the requirement for some form of certification of competent workers by the State Board of Public Welfare.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON CURRENT RELIEF PROGRAM, DIVISION ON GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL WORK

(From the Report of the Committee Presented by Joanna C. Colcord at the National Conference of Social Work)

Up to the announcement in January of the impending cessation of Civil Works, the profession of social work was enthusiastic in its support of F.E.R.A. policies. From that time on, however, we have found ourselves less and less in accord with the retreat from a program of recovery into a position considerably in the rear of even adequate relief. With regard to the program as outlined in March and April, we would like to register our discontent and make several positive recommendations.

1. We would stress the undesirability of a rigid separation between the relief program in the country and in the city. Not all dwellers in rural regions are agriculturalists, and the attempt to put all persons who happen to live there into raising their own food on a sink-or-swim basis will be attended with many individual catastrophes. We deplore the return to work for relief-in-kind in rural regions, and urge that cash wages be paid for any work done, not only because we believe in the superiority of cash relief generally, but because these families, while raising part of their own necessities, will need some cash income to cover what they cannot themselves make or grow. A plan for rural rehabilitation should envisage permitting the small farmer to become again a consumer of manufactured goods, and not condemn him to a primitive existence, divorced completely

from the benefits of belonging to an era of mechanical development.¹

2. While the program for "stranded populations" has not been fully developed, the term "removal of stranded populations" which has frequently been used, gives us concern. As far as this program deals with bettering the economic and social conditions of people where they are, or of assisting on an individual basis, the removal of persons who desire to leave their present habitat, we are in sympathy with it. We recognize that successive migrations of settlers in large groups is no new thing in the history of this country, but those migrations were in the first place made to new and unsettled regions and in the second place, they were entirely voluntary. There is now no unsettled frontier, and no vast popular urge to migrate animating the spirit of our people.

We should look with considerable misgiving, therefore, on a program of wholesale removal of populations from one area to another with which they are not familiar. The virtue of the subsistence homesteads movement, as we have seen it, is that it has been small and experimental enough to permit a high degree of hand-picking among people who volunteer for the opportunity.

¹ Since the above passage was written it appears from regulations issuing from State E.R.A.'s that many of them have relaxed the regulation of no cash wages for work in rural areas.

We believe it would be better to carry people on relief during a period of preparation for such a sweeping change, assisting them to remove gradually and individually as opportunity offers, than to move whole communities en masse, even to more favorable situations. In the present chaotic condition of our settlement laws, transfers of economic refugees from one state or local jurisdiction to another will cause difficulties with local officials, and perhaps result in the transferred families losing what little security a claim of legal settlement now gives.

People undermined in health and morale by long deprivation need the most careful and individualized instruction and supervision if they are to avail themselves successfully of new opportunities which call for vigor and enthusiasm to develop. The farmer who is used to the vagaries of his own poor soil can often do better with it than with richer land and crops which he does not understand. The stranded coalminer cannot be turned by a wave of the wand of opportunity into a successful farmer or mill operative. Our recommendation as to stranded populations would be to "go slow," be sure that there is not the possibility of developing better living and working conditions on the spot, build up depleted strength of body and mind by an adequate health and relief program which includes work relief and vocational retraining, develop by adult educational methods a capacity to attempt a new life, draw freely on the resources and techniques of social work, home economics and farm demonstration work to prepare people for the change, let their own representatives look the proposed home over in the light of this new knowledge, give them time to talk over and accept the new ideas and make their own plans, be sure they understand both possible advantages to be gained and possible dangers to be overcome, and fully comprehend the terms offered; and then accept only volunteers and not all of them that offer!

We note in recent speeches by representatives of Government that considerations similar to those just stated are arising in their own minds, and we hope that this may result in some reconsideration of the program as it appears on paper.

3. We would urge that the F.E.R.A. regard as a continuous responsibility as long as our settlement laws remain unamended, the care of persons and families who have no local or state legal residence. We believe that the development of the F.E.R.A.'s Division of Transient Activities, meritorious though it has been, needs to be modified in several particulars.

a. Medical care including hospitalization should be paid for out of federal funds where it cannot be provided in federally-supported and controlled institutions.

b. The majority of the transient homeless do not need custodial care, and would be helped in their readjustment to normal living if they could be domiciled as are other single workers, in furnished rooms or boarding houses. We urge that congregate shelters be retained only for those for whom some degree of supervision is necessary or desirable.

c. We see no reason, however, why transient homeless persons must be maintained on direct relief and recommend a work program for which cash wages are paid sufficient to permit these persons to pay their own board and choose their own living accommodations.

d. If, nevertheless, congregate shelter must be for the present the only type of care offered, we would protest against the attitude, apparent in many communities, of regarding the shelter as a depository for unwanted labor where people can be cared for cheaply and kept from competing for jobs; or of placing such shelters remote from cities, conveniently out of sight of the citizens, it is true, but with no opportunity for the transients to make normal contacts or improve their situation through their own efforts. Even in the congregate shelter, we believe that opportunities can and should be provided for employment and vocational retraining to restore work habits and revive initiative and self-confidence to the point where transients gain both the ability and the desire to return to normal life and recover ties with relatives and friends. In such a camp, people are encouraged to work out for themselves other plans than indeterminate stay in single shelter, or aimless wandering about in search of the one that offers the most privileges for the least effort.

We believe that every homeless person sheltered by the government should have the opportunity, previously denied him by his transiency itself, of building himself up so that he can recover an individual place of abode and compete on the basis of his comparative ability with others on the labor market. Outlets seem as necessary to us as intake, if the care of the homeless is to be a genuine part of a recovery program and an important aid to such outlets should be a close working relationship between centers for transients and the U. S. Employment Service.

4. Although the giving of home relief in cash is now permitted by the E.R.A., we should like to see it more actively stimulated by that body. We should further like to see more positive policies adopted in placing home relief on a basis of true budgetary deficiency, including in the budget a normal allowance for rent.

5. We should like to see the efforts of the F.E.R.A. extended, through increased facilities for supervision in the field staff and at head-

quarters, toward the promulgation of better standards of case work and of personnel, with more attention to training and staff development in state and local F.E.R.A.'s. In all these directions, progress will be made only if the F.E.R.A. is able to exert continuing and effective leadership.

6. We recognize the great burden laid upon medical and child caring agencies by the increase in people dependent upon governmental sources for relief and feel that some plan may eventually have to be worked out to assist states and localities to carry these burdens. For the present, however, we feel that the relief task itself should be the main objective of the F.E.R.A. and that not till relief is more adequately and uniformly administered for the purposes already authorized should the federal government turn its attention to improving the general social and health resources of individual communities.

7. With respect to the Work Division proposed for urban regions, we are encouraged to know that cash wages are to be paid throughout and payment in groceries no longer permitted in the cities and towns.

We note also that the types of work which are to be encouraged under the Work Division include the production of consumption goods, such as food, clothing, shoes and furniture, by the unemployed workers for the use of the unemployed themselves. The further suggestion is made that existing cooperative self-help associations can be drawn in to play a part in the development of such projects and that the Surplus Relief Corporation can be used as a channel through which raw materials can be purchased and distribution arranged for. We see great possibilities in the development of this industrial type of work relief and hope that it will be energetically furthered by the F.E.R.A.

With these two exceptions, however, we can see little improvement in the Work Division over work relief in its least admirable forms. Specifically, we would make the following recommendations:

a. The F.E.R.A. should abrogate the provision that a worker must be laid off at the end of six months' relief employment.

b. The F.E.R.A. should abrogate the twenty-four-hour weekly maximum, and adjust working days in the week in accordance with relief needs.

c. The F.E.R.A. should demand of the states that all relief workers be covered by regular workmen's compensation insurance.

d. It seems to us important that the extension of the U. S. Employment Service through the N.R.S. be continued and be operated in close con-

junction with the F.E.R.A. All applicants for relief work should also be registered for regular work through the U.S.E.S.

e. In the relief of the unemployed, we believe that the applicant's own signed statement as to his resources and dependents should be accepted as evidence of need and any investigation should be confined to the situation in the applicant's own household and not extended through collateral visits to relatives, employers, etc. We agree in the proviso that but one person in the household should generally be employed on relief work, but when the employment of one member will not meet the family's budgetary deficit, and there is another member able to work, we think it preferable that the two be assigned to relief work, rather than that the family of a worker be forced to accept supplementary direct relief.

f. We believe that no one should be coerced to join the Work Division through the threat of withholding of direct relief as an alternative; that direct relief, with the possibility of work-for-relief as a disciplinary measure, but on quite other projects, should be the community's method of dealing with those unwilling to work, or those discharged for misconduct or inefficiency from the Work Division; and that we should at once set about the development of sheltered workshops and self-supporting labor colonies, on a relief not a wage basis, for people handicapped in body or mind, but anxious and willing to work.

8. We should like to see substituted for the Work Division, however, a work program broad and diversified enough to provide reasonably suitable jobs at all times for all employable people who cannot find regular employment, and who are unable to maintain themselves otherwise. We should like to see wages and hours so adjusted, in compliance with N.R.A. standards, as to produce cash earnings which will provide a minimum subsistence without supplementary home relief. We believe that it is within the competence of this nation to provide such work opportunities, and within its power to pay the bill. We believe that acceptance of the work offered is in itself a considerable guarantee against exploitation by the applicants and that the value to the community of the work done (which it is within the community's power to assure) obviates the need of a "means test" as usually conceived.

9. We should like to see further discussion of the proposal to divorce the administration of relief work from the provision of home relief, by placing it under a separate division of government. Suitable auspices might be found under the P.W.A., or, as in Germany, under the Federal Employment Service.

10. In making these recommendations, we visualize a future in which large numbers of people are going to be quite permanently barred from participation in the ordinary processes of industry; in which the chance to work at all will be a precious opportunity, eagerly sought after; and in which the agencies of government will have to exercise imagination and ingenuity as never before to develop worthwhile tasks in the public service to use the powers which the machine has ousted from employment. The direction taken by Civil

Works, and particularly by Civil Works Service, seems to us to point in the direction we need to go for many years to come.

J. C. Colcord, *Chairman*
 Allen T. Burns
 C. C. Carstens
 Helen Crosby
 Fred I. Daniels
 Alma Haupt
 Dorothy C. Kahn

Russell H. Kurtz
 Bertha McCall
 Edith Mitchell
 Ellen C. Potter
 Henrietta Roelofs
 Linton B. Swift
 Walter West

THE PROBLEM OF "APPROVED TECHNICAL SOCIAL WORK COURSES"

The clause in the Association's new membership requirements which has received the major amount of attention in putting the requirements into effect is "approved technical social work courses."

The question at issue has been whether an "approved technical social work course" should be defined as a course taken in one of the member schools of the Association of Schools of Social Work or whether a more flexible interpretation was required at least for a temporary period. This question was debated originally by the Committee which drafted the new membership requirements. Recommendations of chapters and individual members on the requirements as first drawn up convinced the Committee that the original wording "technical social work courses in an approved school of social work" should be changed to "approved technical social work courses," omitting the words "school of social work." When the requirements were voted on at the Annual Meeting at San Francisco, it was with the definite understanding that the phrase "approved technical social work courses" would permit the flexibility in defining acceptable professional training which many chapters and individual members felt was essential.

As soon as the requirements went into effect, the National Membership Committee began to study the question of standards for approved technical social work courses. The standards of the member schools of the Association of Schools are uneven, since the Association has both graduate and undergraduate schools in its membership and member schools have not as yet been required to meet the standards which new schools are required to meet before being admitted to the Association. Therefore, there was the possibility in applying the AASW membership requirements that training, equivalent in value to that given in some of the member schools, was available in schools not yet eligible for admission under the present requirements of the Association of Schools. There was also the geographical problem with many communities very far removed from

training centers, the special fields problem (for example, few of the schools in the Association of Schools give training for group work and community organization) and even the racial problem, since some of the schools in the Association of Schools do not accept negro students.

To these aspects of the problem it was necessary to add the fact that only about 600 students graduate yearly from the schools in the Association, which does not begin to meet the present demand for trained workers, and that these schools are finding it increasingly difficult to admit the large number of students who wish to take part-time work or who cannot devote at least two consecutive quarters to training.

Some of these difficulties will be eliminated within the next few years. The minimum curriculum for schools in the Association of Schools which wish to give the professional certificate, described on page 4 of this issue, will tend to bring all the schools in the Association nearer to the same standard. Many schools report increased enrollment this year and the constant pressure from the field, especially the new public welfare agencies, will probably make it necessary for the schools to increase their facilities for handling students. Schools which have been slow in qualifying for membership in the Association of Schools will be able to speed up their plans because present demands for trained personnel will convince more college and university authorities that a training program for social work is important.

In the meantime, the AASW is faced with the problem of applying its membership requirements. For the first year of operation, a flexible rather than a rigid definition of "approved training courses" seemed to the Executive and National Membership Committees to be the wiser course. They felt that this would give an opportunity to find out what courses would be offered by applicants for membership, to make some evaluation of these courses and to accumulate more information on problems which applicants meet in securing training.

Accordingly, certain objective criteria were set up for the evaluation of training courses not in

the membership of the Association of Schools. These criteria were originally drafted by a sub-committee of the National Membership Committee of which Frank J. Bruno was chairman. They were approved with some modifications by the Executive and National Membership Committees for an experimental period of one year, and put into operation under the supervision of the Sub-Committee on Training Courses of the National Membership Committee of which Gordon Hamilton is chairman.*

All decisions under these criteria are tentative. Wherever favorable action has been taken accepting any courses, such action has been accompanied by the statement that the acceptance is tentative and subject to review at the end of one year. No change has been made in the membership requirements in setting up these interpretations as the phrase "approved technical social work courses" is not defined in the By-Laws and therefore must be defined in applying the membership requirements. The definition of what constitutes an approved course can be changed at any time if the results of any existing definition seem to the membership to be undesirable.

The present experimental standards permit the acceptance of curricula in social work in colleges and universities of accredited academic standing or of social work courses under either academic or strictly defined professional auspices. Credits in curricula or courses which may be approved are limited to 12 semester hours, which permits applicants to qualify for junior membership, but not for full membership. *The remaining 12 hours required for full membership must be taken in one of the member schools of the Association of Schools.*

Some of the curricula which have been approved so far are in colleges or universities which are definitely planning to qualify for membership in the Association of Schools. Others do not plan to develop a full course of professional training, but wish to qualify their students for junior membership and to encourage them to go on to the graduate schools to complete their training. Curricula tentatively accepted to date in which students may secure enough course credits and field work in the senior or graduate year to qualify for junior membership are as follows: Catholic University, Washington, D. C.; Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo, Mich.; University of Louisville, Louisville, Ky.; University of Iowa, Iowa City; Notre Dame University, Boy Guidance Course, South Bend, Ind.; Northwestern University, Chicago; University of Oklahoma, Norman, Okla.; University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh; University of Washington, Seattle.

Few "random" courses (a term which the Committee uses for single courses or groups of

two or three courses) have been offered so far under either academic or professional auspices. One course has been accepted at Beloit College and several courses at the University of Nebraska in which it is possible for a student to secure enough credit for junior membership. No courses under professional auspices have been found acceptable to date.

The tendency in applying the criteria, as various new problems have been presented, has been to make them more rigid, rather than less so, in order to safeguard the quality of training. Field work requirements have been found inadequate in many cases and in some instances the teaching has been too concentrated either in subject matter or teaching personnel. The question of what qualifications instructors must have beyond AASW membership is still receiving serious consideration.

The Committee on Training Courses, being convinced after one difficult year of experimentation with these standards that the experiment should be continued for another year, has received permission from the Executive Committee to extend the period of experimentation for one more year. The Committee feels that the results of the present flexible definition of "approved technical social work courses" will not be very clear without another year of experience. Some of the courses have only recently been accepted and it is impossible to tell at the present time whether action on these courses will enable any appreciable number of applicants to qualify for junior membership. The random course problem needs special intensive study as present indications are that groups of courses under academic auspices will be developed rather widely for the public welfare group. Some of these courses which have already been studied do not meet the criteria which the AASW has been applying, since they are extension courses for which academic credit is not given and do not include any field work. The institute type of training course has been ruled "non-acceptable." What further developments there will be in the way of training courses for the public welfare field is not definitely known at the present time.

The Committee has received a few expressions of opinion from chapters and individual members on the present interpretation of "approved technical social work courses," some urging a stricter definition, others a broader. The Committee hopes that the other chapters will study the operation of the tentative criteria in their local communities during the coming year and advise the Committee of the results as they see them, so that the Association will know whether the concensus of chapter opinion favors the continuation of the present criteria for the approval of training courses or the limitation of approval to member schools of the Association of Schools.

* These criteria were printed in full in the December, 1933, *Compass*.

Miss Mary E Murphy
848 No Dearborn St
Chicago Ill

Pamphlets and Periodicals

Social Work Today. Published by The Social Workers Discussion Club of New York. Subscription \$1.00 a year for seven issues.

A new social work publication with a definite point of view vigorously expressed. Addressed primarily to "rank and file workers in social agencies," its articles on basic social problems and proposed remedies will be found interesting and thought-provoking by all social workers whether or not they agree with the magazine's point of view.

Interpreting the Social Worker to the Public.

Social Work Publicity Council, 130 East 22nd Street, New York City. Price 50c.

Includes three companion bulletins issued in connection with the joint project of the Social Work Publicity Council and the American Association of Social Workers interpreting competent social work to the public. The three bulletins are: "Source Material on Competence in Social Work," prepared by Mabel B. Ellis, United Educational Program, National Social Work Council; "Public Opinion and the Social Worker," compiled from News Bulletins of the Social Work Publicity Council; "Introducing the Social Worker to the Broader Public," an address given by Stanley P. Davies at a joint meeting of the New York Chapter of the American Association of Social Workers and the New York Social Work Publicity Council.

All three bulletins will be found valuable in local programs of interpretation. Particularly valuable for reference purposes is "Source Material on Competence in Social Work." This brings together quotations from numerous authorities and sources on the meaning of competence in social work, methods of attaining competence and criteria by which the layman can be helped to distinguish between the well qualified social worker and the worker without satisfactory professional qualifications.

Abolish the Pauper Laws. Edith Abbott. Reprinted from Social Service Review, March, 1934.

A revision and amplification of the discussion material on the poor laws which Miss Abbott presented at the Association's Washington Conference on Governmental Objectives for Social Work.

Poor Relief Laws, A Digest. Prepared by American Public Welfare Association. Public Administration Service, Chicago, Ill. Publication No. 37. Price 25c.

Poor relief laws are among the most antiquated on the statute books, escaping notice for the most part until the huge burden of unemployment relief revealed their glaring limitations and inadequacies. This digest of existing laws, covering methods of administration, provisions for indoor and outdoor relief and for state cooperation with local governments should be of great assistance in determining what needs to be done to bring the poor laws into line with modern welfare programs.

Individualized Service for Transients. Robert S. Wilson. National Association of Travelers Aid Societies, New York City. Price 50c.

This publication has been prepared for the use of Transient Directors of Federal Bureaus and of case work supervisors in various agencies concerned with the care of travelers and transients. It is a well-organized and concrete summary of procedures in transient service, emphasizing the constructive results which can be obtained in working with this group if general service programs are adapted to the particular needs of the individual transient.

Introduction to Case Work and Administration of Relief. American Red Cross, Publication 920, Washington, D. C.

Teaching material prepared by the Red Cross for new workers and active volunteers which many other agencies and several schools of social work are finding very useful in connection with courses for unemployment relief workers.